



LIVESTOCK

CATTLE AND CALVES

New Mexico's inventory of all cattle and calves as of January 1, 2006, was 1,550,000 head, a slight increase from 2005. Milk cow inventory increased from 318,000 head to 340,000 head. Dairy producers kept 105,000 heifers for replacement, 5 percent more than the previous year. Beef cow inventory decreased by 2.5 percent to 460,000 head in 2005. Ranchers held on to 90,000 heifers for beef cow replacement. The number of steers weighing 500 pounds and over increased 27 percent to 190,000 head. Bull inventory declined 11 percent to 40,000 head. Calves on hand less than 500 pounds, including both beef and dairy calves, totaled 220,000 head. The 2005 calf crop was estimated at 600,000 head. Cattle and calves on full feed for the slaughter market on January 1, 2005, increased to 143,000 head compared to 126,000 head the previous year. Gross income from cattle and calves totaled \$968 million in 2005, up 1.7 percent.

RANGE AND PASTURE FEED

Beginning in mid-March weekly measurements of range and pasture conditions were taken with ratings of 1 percent very poor, 7 percent poor, 45 percent fair, 45 percent good, and 2 percent excellent. This was a big improvement from the previous year. April reports indicated ranchers received moisture throughout the month to improve range and pasture conditions. Ranchers continued supplementing feed, hauling water, and finishing up branding during the month. May showed some improvement as ranchers were busy moving cattle. Pasture conditions in June remained steady at 6 percent very poor, 12 percent poor, 42 percent fair, 39 percent good, and 1 percent excellent. Temperatures began to get hot as much of the southern part of the state hit 100 degrees in early June. Scattered thunderstorms brought needed moisture throughout the month of July, benefiting most crops, livestock, and range conditions. During August, rangeland improved with scattered

rainfall. Many ranchers spent the month of September culling herds and marketing calves. In October ranchers began weaning calves and moving cattle to winter pastures. Throughout the rest of the year, conditions were dry with cooler temperatures and the final report in the last week of November indicating 7 percent very poor, 28 percent poor, 29 percent fair, 29 percent good, and 7 percent excellent.

DAIRY

Beginning inventory of milk cows was 318,000 head on January 1, 2005, with ending inventory on January 1, 2006, totaling 340,000 head. The number of milk cows during the year averaged 328,000. Milk production continued to climb setting an all time high of 6.95 billion pounds. Cash receipts from marketings and gross producer income both decreased from the previous year due to the drop in milk prices. New Mexico continues to be ranked seventh in the nation in milk production and number of milk cows. Milk was ranked the state's number one cash commodity for the fourth year in a row.

SHEEP AND LAMBS

Sheep and lamb inventory as of January 1, 2006, totaled 155,000 head, up 6.9 percent from a year earlier. The number of breeding sheep for 2005 increased by 10,000 to 130,000 head. Market sheep and lambs held at 25,000 head. The 2005 lamb crop, at 90,000 head, was 5.9 percent above the previous year. Producer gross income decreased 5.6 percent to \$7.1 million. Wool was sheared from 155,000 sheep and lambs, producing 1.15 million pounds. Value of wool produced increased by 42 percent to \$1.3 million as the average price of wool improved by \$0.30 to \$1.20 per pound.